

Message Text

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60

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 041745Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6045

INFO AMCONGEN BELIZE

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1176

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, GT, UK, BH

SUBJECT: UK-Guatemalan talks on Belize

1. FORMIGN MINISTRY ISSUED PRESS RELEASE FEBRUARY 28 AMPLIFY-
ING THE BRIEF JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY GOG AND UK AFTER
THEIR NEW YORK TALKS. RELEASE IS MOST DETAILED DISCUSSION
BY GOG OF POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS GIVEN IN SOME TIME - PERHAPS
EVER - TO GUATEMALAN PUBLIC AND CONTAINS MOST FORTHRIGHT
RECOGNITION TO DATE OF NECESSITY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT INTERESTS
OF BELIZEAN POPULATION. FULL TEXT POUCHED ARA/CEN AND BELIZE.

2. FONOFF STATEMENT SAYS OBJECTIVE OF TALKS IS "TO LOOK FOR
CONSTRUCTIVE AND PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM." IT
SAYS FORMULAS EXPLORED WERE THOSE THAT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED
BY ALL GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENTS SINCE BEGINNING OF CONTRO-
VERSY, I.E. THERE ARE NO NEW IDEAS, BUT RELEASE THEN GOES
ON TO GIVE UNUSUAL DETAILED LIST. "FORMULAS WERE EXPLORED
THAT RUN FROM UNCONDITIONAL RECOVERY OF THE TERRITORY TO
THE SUMISSION OF PROBLEM TO ICJ OR TO ARBITRATION OR TO
NEW MEDIATION PROCEDURE. WITH REALISTIC CRITERIA
FORMULAS WERE EXPLORED THAT RECONCILE THE INTERESTS
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INVOLVED: TERRITORIAL RIGHTS OF GUATEMALA ON ONE HAND

AND INTERESTS OF BELIZEAN PEOPLE ON THE OTHER. AMONG THEM ARE THOSE THAT PROPOSE THE CREATION OF A FREE ASSOCIATED STATE; FEDERATIVE, CONFEDERATIVE, OR COMMUNITARIAN FORMULAS; AND FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS, JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF PETEN AND BELIZE, FREE PORTS, FREE ZONES, FREE INTERCHANGE OF GOODS, CAPITAL AND MERCHANDISE, FREE TRANSIT, AND TOURIST, CULTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND LINGUISTIC ARRANGEMENT, ETC., AS PART OF A GRADUAL INTEGRATION."

3. EVEN MORE UNUSUAL IS STATEMENT THAT EVOLUTION OF IDEAS SINCE END OF WORLD WAR II HAS INTRODUCED, AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT, THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE WHO INHABIT AREA INVOLVED IN DISPUTE OF THIS KING. "IT WILL NOT ESCAPE GUATEMALAN PUBLIC OPINION THAT PROBLEM HAS CEASED TO BE MERELY A TERRITORIAL CONTROVERSY BETWEEN UK AND GUATEMALA, AS THERE ARE LEADERS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN BELIZE AND SECTORS OF ITS POPULATION THAT ASSERT THE RIGHT TO EXERCISE FREE SELF-DETERMINATION OVER THAT GUATEMALAN TERRITORY."

4. STATEMENT CONCLUDES WITH USUAL WARNING AGAINST UDI BUT WITH INTERESTING VARIATION. GUATEMALA IS TRYING TO MAINTAIN PEACE IN THE REGION AND TO LOOK FOR SOME CONSTRUCTIVE FORMULA; "NEVERTHELESS, GUATEMALA CANNOT PERMIT AN INDEPENDENCE OF BELIZE THAT IS GRANTED IT BY GREAT BRITAIN BEHIND ITS (GUATEMALA'S) BACK."

5. STATEMENT CARRIED IN FULL BY SEVERAL LEADING PAPERS. ONLY EDITORIAL COMMENT SO FAR WAS IN MARCH 3 GRAFICO, CONGRATULATING MINISTRY ON ABANDONING FOR ONCE ITS USUAL SECRETIVENESS ABOUT FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DESCRIBING MINISTRY'S VIEWS AS "REALISTIC AND, IN GENERAL TERMS, CORRECT."

6. COMMENT: DESPITE BOTH CONDESCENDING AND THREATENING ASPECTS OF RELEASE, EMBASSY SEES IT AS AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD. IT CAN EVEN BE READ - ALTHOUGH THIS MAY BE WISHFUL THINKING - AS ATTEMPT PREPARE PUBLIC FOR BELIZEAN INDEPENDENCE. GUATEMALA CANNOT PERMIT GRANT

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OF INDEPENDENCE "BEHIND ITS BACK"; LARGE LOOPHOLE IS LEFT FOR INDEPENDENCE GRANTED WITH IT CONSENT AND AS PART OF AGREEMENT INVOLVING GUATEMALA IN SOME WAY IN BELIZEAN AFFAIRS. REPEATED REFERENCES TO RIGHTS OF PEOPLE OF BELIZE AND THEIR EXPECTATION OF SELF-DETERMINATION GO CONSIDERABLY FURTHER THAN FONMIN DID IN HIS UN SPEECH LAST SEPTEMBER (PARA 4 GUATEMALA 5357), AND LATTER GOT MUCH LESS PRESS PLAY THAN DID FRIDAY'S

STATEMENT. AT VERY LEAST STATEMENT FOR A CHANGE MAKES
CLEAR TO GUATEMALANS WHY NO SIMPLE AND QUICK SOLUTION, EVEN
BY MILITARY MEANS, IS POSSIBLE.
ANDREWS

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